

# **California Smoker's Helpline**

## **Brief Program Description**

The California Smokers' Helpline program is a telephone-based program that helps smokers quit smoking. It provides self-help materials and telephone counseling in six different languages: English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, and Vietnamese. The California Smokers' Helpline was inspired by an earlier study that showed smokers were much more likely to utilize a telephone-based program than a face-to-face program. The Helpline was designed to:

- Increase the chance that smokers will make serious attempts to quit
- Reduce the probability of relapse after a quit attempt
- Serve as an resource for physician advice or school-based programs

After smokers initiate their first call to the Helpline, all subsequent counseling sessions are delivered proactively (i.e., Helpline counselors call the smokers at agreed-upon times). There is one comprehensive pre-quit session, and up to five followup sessions. The followup calls are scheduled in reference to the quit date and according to a typical relapse curve, with more sessions scheduled in the earlier stages of quitting than in later stages. The counseling sessions typically occur over a 2-month period. The Helpline has developed specialized counseling protocols for adult, adolescent, and pregnant smokers. Several randomized trials have demonstrated that Helpline counseling doubles a smoker's chance of long-term quitting success when compared to self-help materials.

## **Program Development Support**

The Tobacco Control Section of California Department of Health Services has provided the primary support for the Helpline's work, starting from the first efficacy trial. The Helpline has also received grants from National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; the University of California Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program; and the California Children and Family Commission.

## **Contact Information**

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

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